THE CAYAPA INDIANS*

by
Max Heimann

In the far north west of the Ecuadorian Republic there is a river named the Santiago. Near the village of Borbon it is joined by one of its tributaries, the Cayapa River. The Cayapa Indians, a harmless tribe consisting of no more than 2500 persons, live on the upper reaches of the Cayapa River and around its sources.

I have never been able to understand why they are called "uncivilized" and "savage." Would it be because they dress more simply, more comfortably, more suitably and cheaply than we European fashion slaves? Or would it be because they speak their own language, unknown to us, and because they do not know how to read and write and do not stuff their heads with the dead weight taught in schools and called "education"? Or even, would it be because they have other customs and manners as well as different moral concepts?

One thing is certain—the Cayapa are happy people, because they are more satisfied with their lot than we Europeans, who are so demanding and feel so superior with our conceit in our sham civilization, in the clothes prescribed for us by the tyrants of "fashion" and in the "wisdom" acquired in schools.

They frequently come to town in small groups of five to 20 persons. I have seen them many hundreds of times, but again and again I am delighted when I meet these small, but well-built and sturdy [282] figures. The men are not taller than 150-160 cm. (Translator--5 ft. to 5ft. 4 in.), while the women are barely 140 cm. (Translator--4 ft. 8 in.). Their skin is copper brown in color.

---

* The author a business man, lived in Tumaco (southwest Colombia) for 35 years (1895-1930) and was German Vice-Consul for the Departamento Nariño from 1907 to 1920. Although he never actually visited Cayapa villages, he did have occasions to see and question groups of them "many hundreds of times," on their frequent visits to Tumaco. Apart from this, several of his employees have been in Cayapa villages and have given him reports. (K. Th. Preuss).

2: Murra E-4 (no date) 1943 SD6 Cayapa SD6

Children wear no clothes at all until they are 6 or 8.

The hair is worn loose, long, and flowing by the women but is clipped above the ears by the men. Both sexes wear necklaces and wristbands of glass and porcelain beads, coins, seeds, and beetle wings. Only women wear earrings.

The traditional *Chibcha* custom of frequently painting body and face is found among the *Cayapa*. Red, yellow, and black are used, and the designs are very numerous. Barrett reproduces many of the motifs and insists that there is no special significance attached to any of them, nor is there any age, sex, or property correlation.

TRANSPORTATION

Watercraft.—A large part of every *Cayapa's* life is spent on the water fishing and traveling. Canoes are built with great skill and care. They can withstand not only fluvial but also maritime travel and are routinely sold in the "civilized" coast towns. They are dugouts, usually 10 to 12 yards long but sometimes much larger. Balsa-wood logs are sometimes used as outriggers.

MANUFACTURES

Details of *Cayapa* manufactures are contained in Barrett's work, which describes and illustrates finished products and minutely discusses the techniques of preparation.

Woodworking.—Woodworking includes house building, making deadfall traps, and carving seats and children's dolls.

Weaving and basketry.—The women weave cotton cloth on a narrow native loom, and the men do the sewing. The men also weave the fishing nets and hammocks. Barrett's discussion of *Cayapa* basketry is outstanding. The *Cayapa* make many kinds of baskets, mats, and fans of bark and of various roots.

Pottery.—Pottery is crude and undecorated. It is used particularly for storage. Tradition claims that in their old Highland habitat the *Cayapa* made better pottery but that calabashes have since largely replaced ceramics.

Stonework and metalwork.—Stonework is limited to the metates used in grinding corn and plantains. Although in aboriginal times Lowland Ecuador was a famous area of metallurgy, there is no evidence that the contemporary *Cayapa* practiced it.

Weapons.—The weapon most widely used today is the muzzle-loading shotgun. The blowgun was important in the past, but today its use is restricted to boys, who shoot poison darts while playing at hunting. Hardwood lances are being given up and the bow and arrow is said not to be mentioned in *Cayapa* tradition. The steel machete is ubiquitous.

2: Murra E-4 (no date) 1943 SD6 Cayapa SD6

ECONOMICS

The *Cayapa* economic unit is the virtually self-sufficient, one-family household. Land is owned and worked familially, and there is as much land to be had as the family can clear. If any special rules govern distribution and inheritance, they are not reported by our sources. Also, there seem to be very few provisions for interhousehold cooperation: men will help a neighbor bring down a tree trunk from the hills, but all other activities are evidently left to individual enterprise.

This self-sufficiency does not apply to all spheres of activity. Machetes and rifles are essential in jungle life, and most families make at least one trip a year to the coast for trading and social purposes. In the small Ecuadorean and Colombian towns they find a ready market for rubber, tagua nuts, and other forest products. Cocoa is grown specifically for this trade. There is also a limited market for some of their manufactures: canoes, mats, fans, and other basketry. In exchange, the *Cayapa* want metal goods: axes, machetes, shotguns, fishhooks, fish spears, and copper tubing for their distilleries. But they also like beads and mirrors, pearls, vests, and old derby hats. In recent years machine-made muslins and calicoes have been edging out native-made cloth.

The *Cayapa* are not yet incorporated in Ecuadorean economy. Their need for metal goods and trinkets has not yet forced them to work on plantations or in placer gold mines. Their own supply of rum has helped them avoid debts contracted for alcohol, and they have usually retreated into the forest when their self-sufficiency has been menaced. It is improbable that this selective acculturation can last very long.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

The basic *Cayapa* social unit is the household. Though there is no definite indication as to size and composition, it appears to be an extended family including normally no more than 10 to 12 people. Chief Antonio Napa's house at Punta Venado could seat some 40-odd people at a feast, but it was unique in size, and the Napa household according to Basurco (1894) had only 8 to 10 members.

Barrett (1925) presents a detailed chart of kinship terms used by the *Cayapa*. We unfortunately know nothing about the behavior that goes with the terms or about marriage rules. On the face of it the system is a "lineal" one—collateral relatives are separated from lineal ones but are not differentiated among themselves. Thus, the term for uncle applies to both paternal and maternal ones. All terms are highly descriptive. There is no evidence of reciprocal use of terms, but Barrett's chart is not really complete. The system is quite unique and interesting.

The lineal and descriptive nature of the kinship system emphasizes the bilateral character of the *Cayapa* family. There is no clan organization. The extended family household is the truly basic social unit. There is

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

135 in considerable deposits along this portion of the coast of Ecuador. In fact this region, like a large part of the western coast of South America, is rich in precious metals, those present in this particular locality being chiefly gold and platinum, although silver and copper are also found. It is an interesting fact that platinum first became known to the civilized world through its introduction from the Province of Esmeraldas; it had, however, been discovered and employed to a considerable extent in the making of ornaments by the aboriginal inhabitants of the region about the mouth of the Rio Santiago before its introduction into the modern arts, in fact long before the coming of Columbus. The high development reached in the art of metal-working by the ancient inhabitants of this section is shown particularly by the elaborate and delicately wrought ornaments of gold and platinum, and occasionally also of silver and copper, found so abundantly at La Tolita near the mouth of the Rio Santiago and at certain other points in that vicinity.

325 The Cayapa Indians of the present day are quite differently disposed toward metal-working, for they have no knowledge of the art, now using no metal [439] objects other than those obtained by trade, such as [173] axes, adzes, and machetes. They assert that they never came into contact with the ancient metal-workers of this region, for the reason that they were long ago driven out or exterminated by another tribe which the Cayapa in turn banished in comparatively recent times. Not only do the Cayapa do no metal-work themselves, but

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

CAYAPA INDIANS

462 The women do all the spinning and weaving of cloth,
512 but the men sew all garments, not only for themselves
294 but also for the small boys who have not yet learned to
[291] sew. This is due largely no doubt to the fact that the single garment worn by the women requires no sewing whatever, while the two garments worn by the men must be sewn.

868 At a very early age boys begin to learn the arts practised by their elders, hence they are instructed in hunting, fishing, woodworking, and similar useful accomplishments of the men.

512 It is customary among the Cayapa to arise at dawn, usually between five and five-thirty o'clock, and to retire as soon as darkness comes, or between six-thirty and seven o'clock. These hours vary little throughout the year, owing to the proximity of the equator.

[527] The daily routine is usually about the same throughout the year, varying in event of a fiesta, or boda, which brings the people together at a particular village, from which, after some days of festivities, they return home.

[484] Another diversion is going down the river to the settlements. Sometimes this trip is made almost purely for

[439] pleasure and to obtain oysters and other sea foods, but more often these pleasure trips are combined with the selling of tagua, cacao, rubber, or plantains, and occasionally logs for lumber.

593 One of the most characteristic features of the daily life of the Cayapa is the devotion of the members of a family toward one another, especially that of parents toward their children. Few restrictions are placed

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

AGRICULTURE

As before stated, the Cayapa practise agriculture to such an extent that it may be considered their chief occupation, for by it are produced their chief food supply and also certain materials used in textiles. Under agriculture should be classed not only the introduced domesticated plants, but also certain indigenous vegetal growths which are cared for to a greater or lesser extent. These various products are in large measure raised for consumption by the Indians themselves, but some are sold in the settlements at the mouth of the river.

The regular Cayapa dwelling, as before stated, is situated near the bank of the river, and is almost always flanked, usually on both sides, by clearings and fields. Plantains, bananas, sugar-cane, cacao, cotton, yuca, rascadera, pineapples, yams, tobacco, corn, coconuts, rubber, and certain herbs are grown by the Indians. The first five of these are almost invariably found in the fields immediately adjacent to the house. Some of the other products mentioned, such as yams, corn, coconuts, and yuca, are not raised by all the Indians, and rubber is more frequently grown at some distance from the house, as it thrives better under special soil conditions. In addition to these nearby fields, frequently a favorable location for more or less extensive plantings in the hills is found along the banks of some estero and at a considerable distance from the river. By some of the Indians it is claimed that the plantain grows better at some distance from the main stream, as does also "pita," the plant which yields the tough

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

progress, and in pl. LXV from a drawing so made as to show the wooden "worm" as well as the outside of the still. Such a still is composed of five parts. Three of these consist of (1) a large olla of the form shown in pl. LXXXVII, 7, which serves as a caldron and which is supported over the fire by three stones; (2) a second olla or vaporizer which surmounts the caldron and which is of the form shown in fig. 10 of the same plate; and (3) a flat, inverted cone of copper which rests in turn upon the vaporizer. This copper top, called i'ckala lanō pai'la, as also the large copper kettle used in reducing the cane juice by boiling, is obtained through trade. These appliances [439] are manufactured chiefly by metal-workers in Quito, and both are highly valued by the Cayapa largely because of the difficulties of transportation from Quito to the Rio Cayapas. The upper olla, or vaporizer, called kandyī-hū'lū, is without a bottom and therefore forms a large chamber into which the vapor from the boiling guarapo in the caldron below rises and comes into contact with the inverted copper cone, which is kept constantly cool by frequently changing the water in it. The vapor condenses on the under surface of this copper vessel, runs down to the point of the cone, and drips on a flat grooved board, called kandēlē'hō or kandyīhūlū ta''pa, which forms the fourth element of the still, and which serves in a way the same function as the worm in the still used by civilized peoples. Its position and its relation to other parts of the still are well shown by the drawing in pl. LXV. This "worm" conducts the liquid out through an opening in the side of the vaporizer and

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

[272] freshing and is drunk with much relish by the Indians.
257 The seeds themselves are spread upon mats on the drying platform of the house and are carefully watched during the next couple of weeks to prevent them from being wet by the frequent rains. After this period they are sufficiently dry to be stored away until the next trip down the river, when they are sold to traders. Cacao is
[439] one of the most important exports of Ecuador, whose territory is the source of a considerable part of the chocolate of commerce.

274 Although the Cayapa cultivate so much cacao, they
272 drink it only now and then, usually at fiestas. It is prepared by first thoroughly grinding the dried cacao upon a mealing stone such as is used for grinding plantain, and then boiling. For this purpose the Cayapa make a pot of special form, such as that shown in pl. LXXXVII, 9. The boiling chocolate is stirred at intervals with an implement of special form called tcōkōla'te tcali, illustrated in pl. LXI, 6–7. The result of this process is a comparatively thick, very rich and oily liquid, quite unlike the beverage prepared from the ordinary chocolate of commerce, since the chocolate prepared directly from the seeds as above described retains all the natural oil. It may be drunk in this form, but if sugar is available it is usually added.

249 Pineapples (Cayapa, tci'lya), the only use of which is as
[262] a food, are grown to a limited extent by some of the Cayapa. The green tops of the fruits themselves are planted close together in rows, and from these the plants grow. When once established, such a plant requires

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

very little attention until time to gather the fruit, which in this region is of excellent flavor, especially when allowed to ripen thoroughly on the plant. 249

The fleshy roots of the yuca (Cayapa, kû"tcû) are considerably used as food. The yuca is started by means of cuttings, and requires from seven to nine months to produce the edible roots. These roots are usually boiled in the regular manner when used as an ordinary food, but, as above mentioned, they are also frequently boiled in sugar-cane syrup to make a kind of preserves. The yuca is a very nutritious food, has an excellent flavor, and by many is much preferred to either potatoes or yams. It is never baked. 244 262 [252]

Potatoes (Cayapa, pû'lyû) do not thrive at this low altitude, owing to the heat and humidity, although they grow well in the valleys of the higher Andes. On rare occasions they are obtained from the Indians of these interior valleys who make journeys to the coast for trading and other purposes. They have also been procured in more recent years from the traders about the mouth of the river, but the Cayapa seldom purchase commodities of this class. 244 439 262

Another food of a similar kind which is grown by the Cayapa to a limited extent is the red yam. It is started by cuttings in the ordinary manner. In preparing them for food, the yams are boiled, but are never roasted, as is so frequently done by aboriginal peoples. 244 262 252

Of this class also is the root-stalk of the rascadera (Cayapa, ñû'a), a species of caladium which is grown to a limited extent by a few of the Cayapa. This is also pre-

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

While the fruit of the chonta dura is never eaten raw, there is another palm that produces a fruit similar in form but of a grayish yellow color, which is considerably esteemed in its raw state. Neither of these species of palm is purposely planted by the Cayapa, but when found they are carefully protected, and the fruits are harvested year after year.

One other species of palm, a very tall, slender one, produces a fruit which it eaten raw. To secure this the palm is usually cut down with a machete, which is always carried by everyone going into the jungle.

One of the most important of the natural products of this part of Ecuador is the tagua, or ivory nut. These palms, called ti'ñ tci or ti'mō būlō, are scattered throughout the jungle and are carefully conserved by the Indians, especially where a grove of them is found near a dwelling. The importance of this palm applies both to the Indians and to the negroes and whites. The ripe nuts, timbū pū'ka, or timō pōka, are an article of commerce, and their exportation to the United States and to Europe, where they are extensively used in making buttons, is an important industry. To the Indians, however, the tagua serves at least three other uses. When its green burs approach maturity, they are gathered and taken to the house, where they are cut crosswise with a machete. These burs are covered by an outer shell, called ha'ñda kika. They are very hard and can be cut only with difficulty. Each of the nuts in this stage of its development is an almost transparent gelatinous substance, called tcapi ta'ka, which may

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

as above mentioned, interlace with the fibers of adjoining leaves in such manner as to make it necessary to pry the leaves apart with wooden bars, are strong and pliable, and are woven into burden-bands by which heavy loads are carried. These fibers often attain a length of about four feet and are possessed of tensile strength sufficient to enable their use as strings on the wooden harp which is now made to a very limited extent by the Cayapa. This instrument was borrowed by them from the Indians of the interior, who in turn copied it from the Spanish conquerors.

Another palm, found to a limited extent along the river, is the coconut, called after the Spanish, kō'kō-tcī. It does not, however, thrive at any considerable distance from the ocean, consequently few palms are found even at so short a distance up the Rio Cayapas as the mouth of the Onzole. Pl. CXXXI presents a view looking up-stream at the confluence of the Rio Onzole with the Rio Cayapas, and, upon the projection of land between them, the hacienda of one of the more prosperous of the negroes of the region. Several coconut palms appear in front of the house. Coconuts grow well along the immediate coast, and there are here large groves, the nuts being shipped to nearby villages and to points even as far away as Esmeraldas. They are purchased to a certain extent by the Indians, by whom they are used in very limited quantities as food, more especially for the so-called coconut-milk which is made from the ripe nuts.

In addition to the foregoing food-producing plants,

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

addition to the foregoing food-producing plants, 246
there are various others that are valuable for other materials which they produce. One of these is cotton, called kū'a. The Cayapa are expert weavers and in 286
large measure produce all their own material. Their [439]
textiles are made almost entirely of cotton, the only wool used being that obtained from the Quichua of the higher Andes, or in these days from the yarn of commerce. The yarn used by the Cayapa is always red or blue, and is employed for the sake of the colors, not for the material itself. They grow a white and also a brown cotton, the 248
former being, according to their statements, an introduced species, the latter an indigenous one. These, [386]
together with the green and lavender dyes and the two colors of yarn, give them a total of six native colors. Cotton is usually grown from the seed, and requires little attention when once the plants have attained a fair size. Only a few plants of either the white or the brown cotton are grown by any one family, but they bloom perpetually and are sufficient to produce all the raw material needed. The cotton is allowed to mature completely, that is until the bolls have opened and the ripe cotton is nearly ready to fall. It is then gathered (being in the condition shown in pl. CVII, 11), thoroughly dried, and stored away in packages (such as that shown in fig. 12 of the same plate), and wrapped in leaves of the hoja blanca, until needed for spinning. To a limited extent also the [272]
cotton plant is used in making a beverage, the leaves being boiled after the manner of tea.

Tobacco is considerably used by the Cayapa, but never 276

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

276 to excess as among some other peoples. It is almost never grown by them, their supply coming from their negro neighbors or through trade. The Indians claim that tobacco was not known to this region in aboriginal times, but that it was introduced considerably later than the Spanish conquest. This statement is borne out by the fact that the name for tobacco is ta'kō, which is evidently an adaptation of the Spanish term tabaco. They use neither pipes nor cigarettes, but confine their smoking entirely to cigars made by themselves. They procure the half leaves of tobacco in bundles, which are stored away until a smoke is actually wanted, when each person rolls his own cigar. The habit of chewing tobacco appears to be unknown.

276 776 789 In addition to smoking for pleasure, tobacco is used ceremonially. When it is desired to drive out malevolent spirits from a certain spot, a medicine-man is called in, and, assisted by the ordinary people present and perhaps by another medicine-man or two, he performs a ceremony which makes the place untenable for the spirits. Each participant provides himself with a cigar and a small calabash of a decoction made from the leaves of a certain herb, and all make a systematic tour of the infested place. As they go slowly along they wet everything about them with the decoction, blowing it from the mouth in a fine spray. Interspersed with this spraying is the blowing of tobacco smoke into the air and on any objects with which they come in contact. The head medicine-man sings or whistles certain songs and waves a special banner from time to time as the party proceeds, and

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6, Cayapa SD6

At the present time the hook-and-line is very much used in fishing, though this was introduced by the whites. Strong, slender, fish-poles, called wañgū-tca'll, seven to ten feet in length, are made from the upper branches of the large bamboo. They are gathered when thoroughly matured but while still green, and are hardened and straightened by heating. The lines, called wañgū-tcū'a, or sañdō'a, are made of native pita string and are usually quite fine. The strength of the pita fibers makes it possible to use a very fine line for comparatively large fish. Such a fish-line, provided with a special pottery sinker and an ordinary steel fish-hook, is shown in fig. 9; it is wound in this case on a cylindrical piece of balsa. This line is called tcūndyē'pū and is used in the hand after the fashion of a troll. In case it should be dropped or pulled overboard, it is saved by means of the balsa float. Ordinarily all lines are provided with lead sinkers, but the pottery cylinder especially made as a sinker is an old type and was formerly very much used. Hooks, called wañgi'la, are now obtained from traders at the coast, although it is

FIG. 9.—Fish-line with pottery sinker

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

said that when this method of fishing was first introduced through contact with the early Spaniards, crude hooks were fashioned by hammering out pieces of iron.

At the present time this method of hook-and-line fishing is so much in vogue that almost every man has his special little canoe and a special short paddle which are used almost exclusively for fishing. It is customary to paddle for some distance against the tide or current and then to fish back down with the current along the bank. In this way little effort is required in paddling, and a sculling motion of the paddle with the left hand is sufficient to keep the canoe in its desired course. With a pole and line go a small, hemispherical, calabash dish of angle-worms, a small bottle-shape basket (pl. XCIII, 3) of grasshoppers, or a calabash of a certain small reddish fruit, all of which are used as bait, each according to the kind of fish sought.

On rare occasions the trot-line, called weñgütçû'a (?), such as that shown in pl. CXIX, 1, is used. The main line, called señgi'ri, is made usually of the coarser string fiber called by the Spanish term cosadera, while the small "leaders," called simply sañdô'a, to which each separate hook is attached, are made of pita string.

War

The Cayapa maintain that in ancient times they rarely went to war, and then only on the greatest provocation, as, for instance, when they were harrassed by the former inhabitants of their present domain until forbearance was no longer possible and they descended from their

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

Most families, however, go at least once a year, while
505 those living on the main Rio Cayapas and its tributaries
484 to the limit of tidewater, which is just above the con-
● [439] fluence of the Rio Camarones with the main river, usually go down to the coast several times a year, each time taking with them a load of various commodities such as plantains, tagua, rubber, and cacao, for sale. For such a journey from two to several days are required, and each member of the family must take along his mosquito canopy, his strip of bark cloth which serves as a bed, and other necessary personal articles, while the party must be provided by the women with cooking utensils and food for the journey. Each member is usually bedecked in his best clothing and necklaces, and it is customary also to paint elaborately the exposed parts of the body, as is done on the occasion of a fiesta.

For the protection of the small children, a mat, such as that shown in pl. CVI, 2, is placed with its two ends just inside the gunwales of the canoe so that it bows up in the form of a canopy. Such a protection is shown in pl. LXXX. The cargo of the canoe is always protected from rain with hoja-blanca leaves, or now and then with large plantain or banana leaves. In the Cayapa country, where it rains practically every day, a downpour never hinders one from making a journey. An ordinary rain is met without protection, but if it is very severe one may be well sheltered by holding up a large plantain or banana leaf on the windward side.

505 It is unnecessary to provide a camping outfit in this
484 region, since hospitality is a custom of the country;
574 consequently in making a journey it is necessary only

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

the machete is mounted (pl. LXXXIII, 7). Practically the only difference between this object and a seat such as that shown in fig. 6 of the same plate, is in the presence of the handle at one end. Both the whetstone base and the wooden seat is called tcūmbū'lya.

The whetstones, called tōla'ha, are made of a fine-grained sandstone and are purchased from the settlements down the river. A stone of almost any size is used, but one six by eight or ten inches is most usually employed. It is not fastened to the base, but simply rests upon it in order to bring the stone a few inches from the floor and to make it possible to place the hands on either side lower than the stone when necessary. With this simple apparatus and a hemispherical calabash of water to wet the stone a man will sit and sharpen machetes for a couple of hours at a time, especially when the cane-field is being cleaned or a new area in the bush is being cleared.

In fig. 1 of the plate last referred to is shown another wooden object similar in form to the seats. This is the special wooden base used as a rest upon which to set an earthenware pot as it is being coiled and shaped. Ordinarily these bases consist merely of a flat board of rectangular form. The one here shown is much more elaborate, being circular in outline and having four legs which slant outward from its perimeter; it is also hewn from a single block of wood, as are all the objects represented in this plate.

Another interesting class of wooden objects is dolls, called nawa'wa, made for the amusement of children.

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD 6 Cayapa SD6

248 The cotton ordinarily grown in this section is of a brownish color, and it is claimed by the Cayapa that this is indigenous. It must be said, however, that brown cotton rarely grows wild along the river or in the mountains, but is seen almost exclusively about inhabited places or the sites of recently abandoned habitations.

The second variety of cotton is pure white and is also grown by the Cayapa to a limited extent. It is main- [177] tained that this is not a native plant, but is a direct importation from the mountain region or from the Rio [439] Esmeraldas territory. In fact, this white cotton is now sometimes purchased by the Cayapa in their trips to the Rio Esmeraldas, because so little of it is grown along their own river.

When the cotton bolls open and the seeds with their covering of fine fibers are almost ready to drop, they are gathered and, if necessary, dried. The contents of two of these fully opened bolls are shown in pl. CVII, 11. It is frequently desirable to store the cotton away in this [488] form for some time, in which event a considerable number of the bolls are made up into a package which is wrapped with a leaf or two of hoja blanca. Such a bundle is usually tied with a piece of pitigua and in this form may be stored for an indefinite period. In the bundle shown in pl. CVII, 12, a section of the wrapping has been torn away in order to show the contents. 283 When it is desired to prepare the cotton for use, the bolls are cleaned of the seeds and of any foreign matter that may have become mixed with the fibers, since the presence of any foreign substance interferes materially with spinning. In this

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD 6 Cayapa SD6

283 thread may also be wound into large balls, but because much smaller quantities of these colors are used the balls [439] are usually smaller. Likewise the red and the blue woolen thread, which is obtained by trade through Indians of the interior mountain region, comes in balls an inch or two in diameter, such as the ball of red woolen yarn shown in pl. CVII, 9.

283 Threads of four native colors are used by the Cayapa.
386 Two of these, the white and the brown, are the natural colors of the two species of cotton. The lavender is made by dyeing with a pigment obtained from a univalve procured at the ocean, while the green is produced by a dye obtained from the leaf of a small shrub resembling the [439] locust of the temperature zone. In addition to these native colors the red and blue woolen threads obtained through trade with the Indians of the interior are used. In dyeing the cotton either lavender or green it is wound into short skeins, the winding being usually done upon the great toe of one foot and the thumb of the left hand as turning points. Another method is to drive two wooden pegs into a section of plantain or other succulent stem and wind upon these. The skein thus formed is tied at the two ends near the pegs to prevent it from becoming tangled. It is then slipped off the pegs and placed in the dye, and by rubbing and thoroughly working the dye into the skein, an even as well as a fast color is finally obtained. The skeins are then laid out to dry and are later wound into balls and stored away. Pl. CVII, 8, shows one of these skeins after the dyeing is completed.

Dyes of only two other colors are used by the Cayapa.

adept at tailoring, and make their own clothing. Children learn from their fathers. A few men own sewing machines which they sometimes rent out; some take tailoring orders from their less skillful neighbors. Some men may even make their wives' skirts /pihtahal^{y}i/. The man wears western-style trousers with pegged cuffs that are shaped to permit easier gathering of the trouser leg at the calf, if wading should be necessary. The trousers are held up by leather belts that are purchased. The colors of the trousers are usually dark tones of blue, grey, khaki, or black. The Cayapa are restricted in color choice simply because the available trouser cloth that is purchased in the coastal towns tends to come in these shades. On the other hand, shirt material is available in a wide variety of colors and every conceivable color combination is used, very often in harlequin fashion.

The shirt /huwál^{y}i/ is cut in a rectangular fashion with a short slit neck which forms a 'vee' when worn. Tight short sleeves run down about three inches from the shoulders. The front and rear panels are joined together at the sides by colored stripe of varying widths. The panels may be of the same bright color,

or the front may differ from the back in solid colors. Often the panels may be cut vertically or diagonally with different brightly hued colors. The shirt, which falls to knee-length, is usually bordered at the hem by the same band that joins the front and rear panels. Sometimes the multicolored hem may be overlaid with the panel material that has been cut in triangular points. This gorgeous array is usually topped off with a white plastic fedora that has been smuggled in from Colombia. If the feet are shod, they are usually encased in knee-length rubber boots. For festive occasions, the men wear lipstick and round patches of rouge on their cheeks. Sometimes they also place a round spot of rouge about an inch and a half in diameter, in the middle of their foreheads. The over-all effect is quite striking.

Some men do not use cosmetics but prefer to dress up for fiestas in western clothing that often includes underwear and transparent nylon sport shirts in white, red, blue, yellow, or green. On occasion, a man will place a bright yellow straight plastic comb in his hair. Men quite often buy wrist watches for which they have no earthly use. The watches are fairly expensive, poorly

juice called guarapo in Spanish.

Basketry. Fans, baskets, and pouches, are made in the same style and technique as described by Barrett (Barrett 1925:183-250). There is a market for the fans which are used for fanning the embers in the fire-box when preparing a meal. They are often sold in the coastal towns of San Lorenzo and Esmeraldas as well as in the highland town of Ibarra. The money received for these fans is the property of the woman who made the fans, even though they were sold by her husband.

Weapons. The blowgun has disappeared from general use. Only a few specimens are left. All hunting today is done with the escopeta or muzzle-loading shotgun. Serving both as a tool and as a weapon is the machete or /múste/, and both men and women are quite adept in its use.

Housing.

Probably the cultural feature of the Pacific lowlands which most quickly attracts the eye of the outsider is the type of house used by the rural Negroid population. This is the square or rectangular pile dwelling with four-shed hipped roof of thatch, a peculiar roof crown, and palm-lath floor

of the Cayapa and the Negroes of the area. The extreme humidity of the region, coupled with the saturated, heavy clay soil that predominates, precludes slash and burn cultivation. The Cayapa region is just on the very southern edge of the area marked by a peculiar diagnostic trait:

> . . . slash-mulch cultivation, of probable Indian origin, has evolved. Seeds are broadcast and rhizomes and cuttings are planted in an uncleared plot; then the bush is cut; decay of cut vegetable matter is rapid, forming a thick mulch through which the sprouts from the seeds and cuttings appear within a week or ten days (West 1957: 129).

The main food crops are maize /pí$\check{s}$u/, plantain /pánda/, sugar cane /éla/, sweet manioc /kú?$\check{c}$u/, Rascadera (Xanthosoma sagittifolium), a taro-like aroid tuber called /túa/, squash /ú/, pineapple /$\check{c}$íl^{y}a/, beans /múlu/, and bananas /seda/. The latter were universally considered to be starvation food, and prior to the recent world market demand for them, were fed to the pigs. There are many fruits such as papaya /papá^{i}ya/, oranges /lánsa/, lemons /lémo/, zapote /sapúte/, guabo /$\check{s}$íl^{y}u/, chirimoya (A. cherimola). Some sweet potatoes are grown, but they are scarce due to the depredations of

241
[262]
[171]

pigs who find them especially delectable. The Cayapa seldom plant coconuts, but the Negroes do so whenever possible. Important palms are the Tagua and the Chontaduro. The tagua nut was formerly an extremely important economic product; its hard seed was in constant demand on the world market for the manufacture of shirt buttons. With the rapid development of the plastics industry some thirty years ago, the market for tagua seeds completely collapsed. The Cayapa still talk nostalgically of the days when money did apparently grow on trees. Though its export value has declined, the tagua palm, nevertheless, is still important to the internal economy: the leaves are used extensively for roof thatching, the nut is a minor item in the diet, and when the tree dies, the /múšu/, a delectable and very oily grub can be dug out of the trunk. Both men and women may work in the gardens. Generally speaking, however, the men clear the garden and the women plant the seeds or roots. Men and women may harvest the crops.

824
439

[458]

[262]

241
462

The staff of life for the inhabitants of the Pacific Lowland Culture Area is the plantain which is found in many varieties. It may be eaten green or

262
252

ripe, but most often it is boiled green and then pounded on a mortar. Bits of meat and/or fish may be added to the pulp. In this form it is called bala by both Negroes and Cayapa. In the ripe form, it may be boiled and treated as bala, or it may be eaten raw. Children eat enormous amounts of ripe plantain, and they never seem to become satiated. Important adjuncts to the subsistence pattern are the traveling merchants who bring canoe-loads of dried fish, clams, bread, cookies, sugar, and candy as well as smuggled Colombian cloth and clothing, up from the coast.

Hunting is a very important activity, and most Cayapa men spend one or two days a week tracking game. The main animals are large rodents called guanta /walámbu/, a smaller rodent called guatin /kúyu/, peccary /netúšu/, jaguar /kéla/, puma /lʸukéla/, monkey /wášu/, squirrel /yámbu/, and the armadillo /čilʸámbu/. Large birds are shot whenever possible and include toucans /čandútu/, the wild turkey /éle/, and a hawk /huyálʸu/. At the present time, hunting is done almost entirely with muzzle-loading shotguns. Hunting is generally a small operation involving no more than three

4:Altschuler E-5 (1959-1960) 1965
SD6 Cayapa SD6

except in one instance. The Cayapa of the Río Camerones have decided that no Indian may sell land to a Negro in the upper reaches of the river. Rumors are constantly reported that Negroes are moving in and there is definite concern that community strength is not sufficient to maintain the boundaries. The meager historical data indicate that in the early nineteenth century the Cayapa were largely self sufficient and were not producing much for cash. By the 1900's their wants and needs had increased and they were now engaged in the small scale production and sale of rubber and Tagua nuts. By the end of the first world war rubber and Tagua were major cash crops in the region. During the second world war rubber boomed and Tagua declined almost to the vanishing point. After the war the rubber market similarly declined. By now the Cayapa were well used to money and the things that money could buy, sewing machines, rifles, shotguns, shot, powder, cloth, watches, rubber boots, ready-made clothing, cosmetics, patent medicines, pressure lamps, rice, sugar, soft drinks, and many other products of our tinsel civilization. After the Second World War, Ecuador became a center of a banana boom and the Cayapa were affected greatly. Like the Negroes,

621
433
[432]
621
433
439
458
[249]
[245]
000

harangued the people for about a half an hour during which he said that they were all evil people and that his own son would sponsor the upcoming Christmas fiesta, and that he would help him finance it. This was later done by manufacturing and selling several canoes in Esmeraldas. The chief told the writer that it is very difficult to find sponsors and that he had to sponsor several fiestas in the past because no one else would. By their refusal, Gabriel was forced to assume more control over the fiesta and he was beginning to instruct his son regarding fiesta responsibility.

Sponsorship gives one religious merit. Their gifts are blessed before the statues of the saints by the Chief. The main business of the fiesta is now undertaken--serious drinking. As the effects of alcohol begin to make themselves felt, long smouldering disputes are argued and brought to the chief for settlement. Drunken officials approach drunken single men and attempt to arrange marriages, transgressors against the law are brought before the chief and tried.

Any Cayapa will say that he is a good Catholic, but religion is always manifest as a group, rather

the Río Verde. In fact, she said that she planned to go there with her late husband's brother. Her complaint was that the Rosenda household was "sad, bad, much crying and beating." She wanted to leave her husband permanently. According to my informants, this would be a valid divorce, considering the polygynous circumstances, and she could then remarry. She had left Rosenda without her children, because "the father did not send them along," and therefore within a few days she returned home to Rosenda. It was being said at the time that Rosenda was looking for a third wife.

The area around Cojimíes is a bustling center of the banana trade, and the Cayapa who live there are very well off financially. The people of the San Miguel section are the furthest removed from the banana trade and from time to time go to the coastal areas to work. Sometimes they work for Whites and sometimes for Negroes, but mostly they seek work on Cayapa-owned land. For the first time non-related Cayapa may live and work together and opportunities for liasons are greatly increased. In some instances, as in the following case, they end in a polygynous marriage.

4:Altschuler E-5 (1959-1960) 1965
SD6 Cayapa SD6

CHAPTER V

LAND, PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

Land is the basis of the Cayapa economy. The region, undefined and unsurveyed, has been deeded to the Cayapa as a tribe. Negroes and Whites who desire land must purchase it from an Indian in order to have a clear title. The title is for the land itself and not just for usufruct. The Cayapa may obtain land by cutting it out of the virgin forest (monte jivaro), he may buy it or he may inherit it. More land is available for subsistence farming than for other purposes. For the cash crop of bananas the land must be of good quality, well drained, and within easy access of a navigable stream that flows into the main river body traveled by La Propaganda, the banana buyers. In addition, the grower must be able to meet the banana boat on schedule. A stand of rubber trees will also increase the value of the land. Rubber is sold in Colombia where, traditionally, the price is higher than in Ecuador and retail prices on consumer items wanted by the Cayapa are cheaper. Once a year, as a rule,

423 [177] [425] [432] [425] [311] 423 439 [245] [249] [435]

Once a year, as a rule,

groups of Cayapa will band together for protection against the cutthroats and brigands that infest the coastal regions, load their canoes with as much rubber as they have been able to collect, and set off in small flotillas. Sometimes they are joined by a few Negroes. Bringing rubber into Colombia in this manner is illegal and it is also illegal to bring back Colombian goods into Ecuador. The Cayapa are very conscious of the illicit nature of the activity and the trip to them is a big adventure. Rubber is their only economic product that is of value in Colombia. The price varies from year to year, but generally fluctuates around the equivalent of thirty dollars U. S. per one hundred pounds. Unfortunately, rubber trees are subject to poaching.

If the land is sufficiently remote, it may be good for raising pigs. (Remoteness lessens the possibility of theft.) Fruit trees are very often planted by women when they marry. The most popular fruits are chirimoya, a kind of custard apple, oranges and sapotes. Large sections are planted to the tagua palm that, at one time, was as important economically as the banana is today. The tagua nut is only a minor item in the

off with the latex. Buru claimed that the land was his, as he was the eldest son, and Segundo agreed to leave the untapped trees for Buru. But they are three brothers, and the *[illegible]*, to avoid further fighting, divided the land three ways among them.

423
685
593

The rubber poacher keeps most of the profits. Espíritu Santo had a piece of land on which was a stand of about fifteen rubber trees. Chapiro tapped them without permission and collected about fifty pounds of rubber. He turned the rubber over to his brother, Bertram, who went to Colombia with Pablo Ñapa and two Negroes, Estupinian and Manuel Caisero. Bertram sold the rubber for Chapiro. Buru Cimarrón had noticed that the trees were tapped and told people that Ciro had done the poaching. But Santiqueño, Ciro's brother, had seen Chapiro skulking in the vicinity and told people that the trees had, in truth, been tapped by Chapiro. Buru's wife, who is Espíritu's sister, became very angry with Chapiro and said that if she were a man, she would beat him up. Some time later at a party in Encanto, Espíritu approached Chapiro and asked how much he had gained by the sale. Chapiro did not argue, and

685
627
423

[439]
[177]

685
422
[694]
439
[177]
[695]
[696]
[627]

returned, he found that his pigs were gone. He suspected Perdomo of having taken them, and for one year he questioned residents of the area for evidence. At last he found the Negro who had bought the pigs and he identified Perdomo as the man from whom he had bought them. Lorenzo took this evidence to the late /únʸi/, Arcilio, who returned with him and held a hearing. Perdomo was present, but said very little in his own defense as Ramón, a Negro employee of the man who had purchased the pigs, identified Perdomo as the seller. The pigs had been sold for five hundred sucres, and the /únʸi/ ordered Perdomo to pay four hundred sucres to Lorenzo, fifty sucres to the witness, Ramón, and fifty sucres as a fine to the /únʸi/, who had lost two days work to attend to this matter.

Perdomo was not permitted to keep any of his ill-gotten gains nor, aside from the shame of being uncovered as a thief, was he penalized in any manner. As a rule, irregularities involving pigs are settled quickly. If a pig eats the produce from someone else's garden, for instance, payment is made for the produce without question. Occasionally, however, a quarrel involving pigs may become quite serious as is seen in the following